

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting
of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
Tuesday, November 20, 2018
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148**

Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Present:

Paul Sagan, Chair, Cambridge

James Morton, Vice-Chair, Boston

Katherine Craven, Brookline

Amanda Fernandez, Belmont

Maya Mathews, Student Advisory Council, Newton

Margaret McKenna, Boston (participating remotely via video conference)

Michael Moriarty, Holyoke

James Peyser, Secretary of Education

Mary Ann Stewart, Lexington

Martin West, Newton

Jeffrey C. Riley, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Member of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Absent:

Ed Doherty, Boston

Chair Sagan convened the meeting at 8:31 a.m. He announced that Ms. McKenna would be participating remotely and Mr. Doherty would not be in attendance. Members introduced themselves.

Commissioner Riley informed the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) that the Early College Joint Committee (ECJC) met on November 7, 2018. Staff from the Department of Higher Education (DHE) and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) provided updates on the initiative; representatives from a designated Early College program offered reflections; and the ECJC discussed ongoing policy considerations.

Commissioner Riley reported that the Department has begun the process to review and update the 1999 Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Framework and has assembled a review panel that is broadly representative of the field and reflects diverse backgrounds and perspectives. The panel will make recommendations to the Department on a revised framework outlining the skills and knowledge students need to maintain overall health and wellness. Commissioner Riley said he expects to present the draft of the revised framework to the Board in late spring/summer 2019 for review and to release for public comment. The aim is to present the final document to the Board for approval in late fall/early winter of school year 2019-2020, so districts can prepare to implement it beginning in 2020-2021.

Commissioner Riley updated the Board on Governor Baker's recent signing of *An Act to Promote and Enhance Civic Engagement*. The new law complements the Board's action earlier

this year to approve the revised History and Social Sciences curriculum framework, with its emphasis on civics education. He referred the Board to his memo, which provides further detail.

Commissioner Riley noted the recent news story regarding fiscal issues at the Helen Y. Davis Leadership Academy Charter School. He reminded members that the Board placed the school on probationary status last year. He said he will update the Board at a future meeting.

Ms. Craven arrived at 8:35 a.m. and Mr. West arrived at 8:36 a.m.

Public Comment:

- 1. Robert P. Sanborn III, Superintendent/Director, Cape Cod Regional Technical High School** addressed the Board on Proposed Amendments to Competency Determination Regulations on High School Science, 603 CMR 30.00

Superintendent Sanborn responded to questions from Chair Sagan and Secretary Peyser about options for students if the state phases out the Technology/Engineering MCAS test. Superintendent Sanborn said he would need to add staff to continue the engineering course and also prepare students for biology or physics MCAS assessments. He said the Technology/Engineering course at his school was a two-year course offered to 9th and 10th graders; this year it is a one-year course for 9th graders.

- 2. Cecelia Doucette, MTPW, BA, Technology Safety Educator** addressed the Board on technology safety.

Mr. Moriarty arrived at 8:51 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approves the minutes of October 30, 2018 Regular Meeting.

The vote was unanimous.

Board of Elementary and Secondary Education FY20 Budget Proposal and Report from the Board's Budget Committee

Chair Sagan introduced Bill Bell, Senior Associate Commissioner/CFO; Julia Jou, Budget Director; and Deputy Commissioner Jeff Wulfson. Katherine Craven, Chair of the Board's Budget Committee, presented the committee's recommended budget priorities for consideration in the FY20 budget. She said the committee's memo addresses key items the Board has advocated, including English Language Learner programs, the STEM Learning Initiative, Next-Generation Assessment, Civics Education, and Targeted Assistance.

Deputy Commissioner Wulfson noted the work of the Foundation Budget Review Commission and the legislative activity on school funding this past session; he said the Department, Executive Office of Education, and others are picking up the work and developing policy options for the Governor's consideration. Deputy Commissioner Wulfson said new education dollars should be targeted to districts with the greatest needs and urgency. He said discussions with the Executive Office of Administration and Finance will help to determine how any changes in school funding would fit into the overall state budget for FY20.

Ms. Craven noted that the Board has a special responsibility for Holyoke and other receivership districts. She added that about 30 districts are in a similar position in relation to net school spending. Deputy Commissioner Wulfson said the districts we are most concerned about are those with low school spending and high student needs, as well as smaller rural districts, particularly out west, with declining enrollment. He said while every set of districts has its needs, the first and foremost goal is to close achievement gaps is, and new investments have to pay off in improved student performance.

Mr. Bell said the Targeted Assistance account can be used more directly than Chapter 70, to focus on districts and students in need. He noted that the FY19 supplemental budget added to the Targeted Assistance line item and said we hope to see that level increase in the FY20 budget.

Commissioner Riley said the Foundation Budget Review Commission outlined the need to address the funding formula, particularly for Gateway Cities, and he hopes the Legislature will take action this coming year. Mr. Moriarty said this is a structural problem without any quick fixes and we need sustained effort by the Administration and Legislature to close the funding gap. Chair Sagan asked Secretary Peyser what else the Board should do on this issue. Secretary Peyser said the discussion today reinforced that this is not just about the amount of funding but how it is used to support strategies that improve outcomes for students. He added that the Commissioner rightly flagged the Targeted Assistance account as a lever for improvement. Ms. Stewart asked if the Board should send a letter in response to the Foundation Budget Review Committee's report. Ms. Craven said the Board's budget recommendation covers the key issues, and funding for Targeted Assistance is essential to address disparities in student results.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with Mass. Gen. Laws chapter 69, § 1A, approve the budget priorities for the FY2020 education budget as recommended by the Board's Budget Committee and the Commissioner, and direct the Commissioner to convey these recommendations and priorities to the Secretary of Education, the Governor, and the Legislature.

The vote was 9-0-1. Secretary Peyser abstained.

Proposed Amendments to Competency Determination Regulations on High School Science, 603 CMR 30.00

Commissioner Riley invited Michol Stapel, Associate Commissioner, and Lucy Wall, Legal Counsel, to join Deputy Commissioner Wulfson for the discussion with the Board. He recommended that the Board vote to solicit public comment on the proposed amendments.

Deputy Commissioner Wulfson stated that the Commissioner is not asking the Board to make any decision today other than to send the proposed regulations out for comment. He added the amendments have two purposes. One is to set an interim passing standard that holds the bar constant for the classes of 2023 and 2024 taking the Next-Generation Science tests, which is parallel to what the Board has already done for the English Language Arts and Mathematics high school tests. The second change is to remove from the regulation references to specific subject area high school tests, leaving the Board discretion to decide which Science subject area tests will be offered to students to meet the Competency Determination requirements.

Deputy Commissioner Wulfson said the second change stems from our review of the four existing high school Science tests and the concern about whether it is a prudent use of resources to revise and update two tests – Chemistry and Technology/Engineering – that are taken by relatively few students around the state. He noted that the Commissioner will be continuing discussions with the field before making a final recommendation. Deputy Commissioner Wulfson said the proposed amendment leaves the Board with flexibility. In response to a question from Mr. West, the Deputy Commissioner said the Science curriculum framework will continue to encompass Technology/Engineering, even if the phrase is dropped from these regulations.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with G.L. c. 69, § 1B, hereby authorizes the Commissioner to proceed in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, G.L. c.30A, § 3, to solicit public comment on the proposed amendments to the Competency Determination Regulations, 603 CMR 30.00, as presented by the Commissioner.

The proposed amendments establish an interim passing standard for students in the classes of 2023 and 2024 in science, and update outdated language and references in the regulations.

The proposed amendments also remove references to specific subject area high school tests, granting the Board the authority to determine which subject area tests will be offered to students to meet the competency determination requirements.

The vote was unanimous.

Ms. Stewart said she appreciated the Commissioner's informational memo on the Family-friendly Guides to the Massachusetts Learning Standards, and asked if there is a plan to publish

them in languages besides the current four (English, Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, and Chinese/simplified characters.) Commissioner Riley said the Department is looking generally at how we might use technology to make more publications available in various languages, and he will update the Board in the spring. Chair Sagan asked the Commissioner to send Board members the link to all the curriculum guides.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adjourn the meeting
 at 9:19 a.m., subject to the call of the Chair.**

The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education
and Secretary to the Board